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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/847,446	05/02/2001	Clayton J. Allen	6327-1018	7738

7590

11/14/2003

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EXAMINER

GLESSNER, BRIAN E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3635

DATE MAILED: 11/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/847,446

Applicant(s)

ALLEN ET AL.

Examiner

Brian E. Glessner

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 April 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 and 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 May 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 1.5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

The following office action is in response to the application filed on May 5, 2001.

Claims 1-5 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected. Claims 3 and 4 are objected to, and claim 5 is withdrawn from consideration for being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 12 and 13 of U.S. Patent No. 5,680,738.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they are both claiming a steel framework of a building having a first steel beam having upper and lower flanges and a web therebetween, a steel column having first and second flanges with a web therebetween, and a separation or hole located in the beam between the web and the flange that has a length at least 3 times the thickness of the beam web.

Election/Restrictions

3. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

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- I. Claims 1-4, drawn to a steel framework, classified in class 52, subclass 729.1.
- II. Claim 5, drawn to a method for relieving strain concentrations in a load bearing and moment frame connection of a steel frame, classified in class 29.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

4. Inventions I and II are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the product as claimed could be made by a materially different process. The beam and column could have the separation formed by merely removing a portion of the web without determining the strain concentration factor.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. During a telephone conversation with Brian Drazich on 10/22/03 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-4. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claim 5 is withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

7. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the

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application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Drawings

8. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the slot having a larger width near the column and beam interface and a smaller width at the opposite end must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered. The applicant shows in figure 31 a tapering slot, but it has a smaller width at the beam/column interface and a larger width at the opposite end. This is the opposite of what is being claimed.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

9. Claim 4 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim cannot be dependent upon another multiple dependent claim. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claim has not been further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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11. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bernardi (3,716,959) in view of Houghton (5,660,017).

In regard to claims 1 and 2, Bernardi discloses a steel framework comprising a steel column 12 having a first flange, a second flange, and a web between the flanges, a steel beam 10 having a lower flange 18, an upper flange 16, and a web 22 between the flanges, the beam being welded orthogonal to the first flange of the column, column 3, lines 50 and 51, and a separation 28 of the beam flange from the beam web equal to or greater than 3 times the beam flange thickness in length in the beam, column 3, lines 29-49. Bernardi does not specifically disclose that said slot is located adjacent the lower flange of the beam, or that there is a slot located adjacent to both the top flange and the bottom flange. Houghton teaches that it is known to place a separation 52 adjacent to both a top and bottom flange of a beam, figure 7. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to place a separation near both the top and bottom flanges, because the slots will help to relieve the stresses in the connection between the beam and the column by allowing elongation in the beam. Further, the duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art.

Allowable Subject Matter

12. Claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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13. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The prior art references of record do not teach or suggest the use of a tapered slot. Therefore, the examiner believes there is no proper motivation to make Bernardi's slot tapered.

Conclusion

14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Houghton, Kasai et al., Aschheim, Metzler, Chen et al., and Matthews et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian E. Glessner whose telephone number is 703-305-0031.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl D. Friedman can be reached on 703-308-0839. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-2168.

B.G.
October 23, 2003



**BRIAN E. GLESSNER
PATENT EXAMINER**